

WE CLAIM:

1. A method for impregnating a Group VIII metal on a molecular sieve - binder extrudate wherein the binder comprises a low acidity refractory oxide binder material, which is essentially free of alumina, comprising:
 - a) contacting the molecular sieve - binder extrudate with an aqueous solution of a corresponding Group VIII metal nitrate salt having a pH of below 8, wherein the molar ratio between the Group VIII metal cations in the solution and the number of sorption sites present in the extrudate is equal to or larger than 1, and
 - b) drying the molecular sieve - binder extrudate obtained from step a).
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the molar ratio between the Group VIII metal cations and the number of sorption sites is between 1 and 20.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the number of sorption sites in the molecular sieve - binder extrudate is reduced prior to the impregnation of the Group VIII metal by means of a dealumination treatment.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein the dealumination treatment comprises contacting the molecular sieve or molecular sieve - binder extrudate with a solution of ammonium hexafluoro silicate.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the Group VIII metal is Ni, Pt, and/or Pd.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the Group VIII metal nitrate salt is $\text{Ni}(\text{NO}_3)_2$, $\text{Pt}(\text{NH}_3)_4(\text{NO}_3)_2$ or $\text{Pd}(\text{NH}_3)_4(\text{NO}_3)_2$.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein the molecular sieve is of the MFI, TON, MTT or MTW type.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein the binder is silica.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein step a) is performed with an aqueous solution of the corresponding Group VIII metal nitrate salt having a pH in the range from 3.5 to 7.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein step a) is performed in the essential absence of ammonium ions.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein step a) is performed by pore volume impregnation.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein step b) is performed according to an accelerated drying profile having a duration of less than 90 minutes, in which the temperature is increased from room temperature up to more than 200 °C.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein the molecular sieve is in its H-form before impregnation.
14. A hydrocarbon conversion process comprising contacting the hydrocarbon with a catalyst containing the molecular sieve - binder extrudate produced by the method of claim 1, wherein the molar ratio of the Group VIII metal cations present in the extrudate and the number of sorption sites present in the extrudate is between 1 and 20.
15. A dewaxing process comprising contacting a hydrocarbon feed with a catalyst containing the molecular sieve - binder extrudate produced by the

method of claim 1, wherein the molar ratio of the Group VIII metal cations present in the extruder and the number of caption sites present in the extruder is between 1 and 20.